



Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

News

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Update: First Drug Court graduation in Cabell County **For immediate release Monday, December 13, 2010**

HUNTINGTON, W.Va. – Justice Brent D. Benjamin will speak at the first Cabell County Drug Court graduation ceremony at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 14, 2010, in the Cabell County Courthouse, Courtroom One.

There will be one graduate from the program, which opened in September 2009. Currently there are about 18 adults in the program.

Cabell County Family Court Judge Patricia Keller oversees the drug court program.

Adult drug courts serve only those who have either pled guilty or been found guilty of non-violent misdemeanors and felonies, and who were motivated to commit those crimes due to a substance abuse addiction. People can volunteer for the programs to avoid jail and prison sentences, if a judge so orders. Prosecutors have final approval of all participants, and all participants must be evaluated as a low to moderate risk to be released back into the community. People who have been charged with sex crimes or crimes in which a child was the victim are not eligible.

Participants undergo substance abuse treatment and are heavily supervised by probation officers, law enforcement, and the sentencing court. If needed, they may also undergo treatment for mental illnesses. Participants may be forced to repeat certain phases if they have positive drug screens or if they refuse to cooperate. The judge may impose jail time if he feels it is necessary to make a participant follow the protocol.

Adult drug treatment courts are recognized as an important strategy to improve substance-abuse treatment outcomes and reduce crime. Treatment courts produce greater cost benefits than other strategies. (GAO February 2005 report).

West Virginia has eleven regional adult treatment court programs serving twenty-seven counties and ten juvenile treatment courts serving twelve counties.

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Note: Supreme Court press releases are now available on Twitter at [wvcourts](https://twitter.com/wvcourts). Press releases will continue to be posted on the Court website, however the Listserve will be discontinued January 1, 2011.